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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KATHMANDU 000915

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR SA/INS

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [MCAP](#) [PGOV](#) [NP](#)

SUBJECT: PRACHANDA DECLARES A CEASEFIRE AFTER ATTACK IN
ROLPA

REF: A. (A) KATHMANDU 906

[1](#)B. (B) KATHMANDU 872

SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (SBU) An e-mail to evening newspapers purportedly from Maoist supremo Prachanda unilaterally declared a one-month ceasefire starting June 15. There has been no official reaction yet from the Government of Nepal (GON) to the offer. Security forces continue to search for survivors of the May 7 Maoist attack on a combined Army/Police outpost in Gam, Rolpa. Prachanda's announcement, coinciding with the Prime Minister's highly publicized visit to the U.S., appears to a clever, well-calculated ploy to drive a wedge between the GON and other political parties before an all-party meeting May [1](#)10. End summary.

CEASEFIRE BY E-MAIL

[1](#)2. (U) Late May 9 Nepali evening newspapers received an e-mail purportedly from Maoist leader Prachanda announcing a one-month unilateral ceasefire beginning May 15. An unofficial translation of the e-mail follows below.

Begin text of e-mail:

The killers of brothers, who have attained power through tyranny, have now gone begging to the American Imperialists. They are committed to crushing the evolving political forum by calling foreign military forces into the country. The American Imperialists are openly moving ahead to establish a military base in Nepal, as they have done in Afghanistan and Central Asia. This establishment will be used for a long-term strategy to surround China and India, and therefore America is openly indicating they support these political parties. George Bush has called his adopted son Sher Bahadur Deuba to America to instruct him as a Master and to give military support. The American military team that came to Nepal has recommended to increase the Royal Nepal Army to 200,000, establish an air force, and make modern helicopters and military equipment available. This recommendation shows that America is trying to fulfill its self-interest by using the Gyanendra/Deuba group and is trying to make Nepal like Vietnam.

Due to this grand design, the Nepali Army has declared a reward on the Maoists' head. All other political parties being aware of this situation have called on the government for political dialogue to solve the existing problem. In this regard all those in Parliament and outside should come forward to go against the Royal Nepal Army. If this is the situation, we will declare a joint effort to fight against these traitors.

Because the 25 of May 2002 is the end of the six months of emergency, and because of the requests of our friends to have working flexibility and a strategic commitment on our side for future political possibilities and our revolutionary possibilities, we have declared a ceasefire from our side from 15th May 2002 for the period of one month. If during this period there is suppression on all grounds and anti-national activities are conducted, we will launch a massive war.

Prachanda
Chairman
NCP (Maoist)
8th May 2002
End text.

[1](#)3. (SBU) As of COB May 9, the Government of Nepal (GON) had no official reaction to the statement. The Public Affairs Officer for the Royal Nepal Army (RNA) said he had not yet even seen the e-mail--although he had heard about it--but volunteered his own unofficial opinion that the offer was not sincere and the GON would not be taken in by it. The RNA has the Maoists on the run, he posited; the insurgents are

wearing out. They would only use the ceasefire as a "respite" to regroup and consolidate their depleted strength.

14. (SBU) Prachanda's offer follows closely on a May 1 announcement that the Maoists would welcome dialogue (Ref B) and falls just the day before an all-party mass meeting and rally in the capital May 10. Organizers are expecting a large turnout for the rally, which will focus on calls for an end to violence. Student wings of the various parties plan to hold a peace march to coincide with the rally. The all-party meeting was expected to take up for consideration Prachanda's call for dialogue, among other matters. The meeting, like Prachanda's announcement, coincides with the high-profile visit of Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba to the U.S.-- a visit that has generated substantial and often erroneous or unrealistic speculation regarding possible U.S. military assistance to the GON to defeat the insurgents. Before leaving, Deuba had publicly rejected dialogue without an accompanying agreement from the Maoists to lay down their arms.

GRIM NEWS FROM GAM

15. (SBU) Information from Gam, Rolpa, where the Maoists launched an attack on a combined police and Army outpost May 7 (Ref A), continues to be spotty. According to the latest accounts, a total of 123 security personnel (53 RNA, 40 regular police, 30 Armed Police Force) were at the outpost in Gam at the time of the attack. After the attack, 35 badly burned bodies have been found. Because of the bodies' condition, the authorities have been unable to determine if they are Maoists, security forces or villagers. Twelve wounded RNA, one policeman, and five Armed Police have been evacuated to hospitals, and five other RNA and six regular police survived the attack. The rest remain unaccounted for. Police sources say that no villagers have been found in Gam. Whether the residents were killed, abducted, or fled remains unknown.

COMMENT

16. (SBU) Prachanda could not have picked a more opportune time to send out peace signals. The offer comes just as Deuba is visiting Washington and London to ask for assistance to defeat the Maoists, and just as many of his political opponents--including some in his own party--have called a mass meeting on finding a peaceful resolution to the conflict. Deuba has already rejected Prachanda's first overture. Rejecting the second one will put the PM in the difficult position of seeming to turn down a chance at peace, and can only give his domestic critics--and often self-serving political rivals--more reason to find fault. But bitter experience with the Maoists' perfidy in the first ceasefire and accompanying negotiations, during which the Maoists rearmed and regrouped, has taught Deuba and the security forces not to trust their professions of peace. We do not expect the GON to reciprocate the Maoists' (likely spurious) offer.
MALINOWSKI